TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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No. 48
December, 1948

Accent on Rural Children

J. MARGUERITE COLE

• Nestled between partially wooded mountains lies an exquisitely beautiful valley, eight miles long and three miles wide, known as Potter Valley. To locate it as to general situation, it is seventeen miles east and north of Ukiah, Mendocino County, California. Coming to the community two years ago, from the intense heat and winds of the Sacramento Valley, it immediately appealed to the writer as a real haven of almost mosquitoless peace!

There live in the valley approximately 200 to 225 families averaging about 4 to a family, bringing the population to around 900. The grammar school has about 120 pupils, while the high school numbers around 42. Without doubt the strongest local organization is the Grange, but the Farm Bureau holds an excellent place, as well as the P.T.A., and the Progress Club. Dairying and pears are the two main types of ranching.

We Discuss Plans

After observing a pretty continuous schedule of get-acquainted calls during the summer, we felt we were ready to discuss plans for tackling *after-school weekday work for the children,* with the best equipped helpers available. In all the charges we have served, we have found that one of the most fruitful ways of getting in touch with the community and the homes was the holding of a class or classes after school, usually on Tuesday or Wednesday, for the primary and junior ages of children.

Posters, newspaper publicity, postcards, announcements in Sunday school and church, Grange, or any other place, the week before the start of the classes, all help to get the enterprise before the community. However, the big word in any child's life is "party," so a party we have the very first time we hold a session.

Getting Under Way

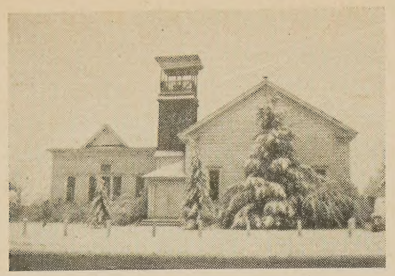
In Potter Valley we were able to get our classes announced in the grammar school for Grades 1-6 inclusive. We started about the first week in October, and meet every school week until the first or second week in May. As our children are scattered all over the valley, we are very fortunate in securing the cooperation of the school authorities in regard to a large part of our transportation problem. The first school bus leaves at 2:15 p.m., with grades 1-3, stops at the church door, and lets off any who wish to attend the church class from this group. We have them until the 3:45 p.m. bus comes with grades 4-6 inclusive.

Any from this group who wish to attend the next church class get off, and this same bus takes on the ones from grades 1-3. At 5 p.m., volunteer laywomen come and take the children home. Our attendance through the two years, which has been carefully checked, has averaged 40 children, with the proportion in the two classes running about 24 in the Primary to 16 in the Junior, which follows pretty closely the proportion in those grades at school.

As To Procedure

As to our procedure, we have taught carefully selected hymns, according to the understanding of the children, and notable passages of Scripture, as Ps. 100, Lk. 2: 8-14; Matt. 2: 12. Picture talks are given and reviewed at every session. Missionary stories from many countries are used in a large proportion of our sessions. These are often illustrated by pictures from the writer's collection showing home and village life. A part of each period is taken up with work based on some weekday religious education textbook, in which case the children have their own handwork books to fill out and color.

During the year we make notebooks for a children's hospital, or to send abroad. We cut and make village scenes of people in other nations, and the girls have made baby quilts to be sent to India, as well as some knitted squares to be placed in an afghan for China. Both boys and girls make Christmas cards for



Potter Valley Community Methodist Church
Potter Valley, Mendocino County, California

the Orient, and last Christmas they made all the decorations on the tree for their own celebration in our own Social Hall. They have learned several prayers and the collect. At least half a dozen families have become more or less closely drawn into the church life as a direct result of our Wednesday class, whose children had not been attending anywhere. We might explain that the seventh and eighth graders are combined with our high school group in the youth fellowship Sunday evening, not an ideal way, but seemingly the most workable for the present.

Prayer and Dinners

In stirring up general interest, and building a real church family life, nothing has helped more (outside of real and persistent prayer) than our once-a-month pot luck dinners, committees for which are provided by the W.S.C.S. Whole families attend, and during the fall and winter months we have anywhere from 40 to 75.

Following the dinner, we have community singing with folk songs, and then hymns with our devotions, whether these are held first or last. An out-of-town speaker, usually a neighboring pastor or missionary or traveller, is provided. Once we had a short play put on by four young married people. Several times we have had wonderful sets of kodachrome slides or movies taken by local people who have given their own description or running comment on them. Often we are able to secure some special musical talent to enrich the evening.

Our Sunday school superintendent, at the present time, is a very fine young man. He and his faithful teachers are doing an excellent piece of work.

Our Worship Service

We have been happy to have a junior choir sing a specially chosen and practiced hymn, perhaps on an average of once a month. Occasionally, a small group of high school girls sing for us, also. There is a community women and girls' choral club which sings several numbers on special occasions, such as Christmas and Easter. Laymen take a service, or a large part of it, at least twice a year. A Bible study and prayer group has run for two to four months, once a week. The leadership of the W.S.C.S. has been excellent. With a membership of over forty they have attained many goals. One notable one has been the increased missionary and spiritual interest. There are plenty of discouraging aspects but we are truly praising God for the hearts and minds and lives that have been stirred anew through these lines of endeavor.

Harvest Festival at Broadway and Wall Street

• In the well-known Trinity Episcopal Church, located at Broadway and Wall Streets, New York, there is held an annual harvest festival separately from the national Thanksgiving.

The sermon was preached in 1948 by the Rt. Rev. Horace W. E. Donegan, Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of New York. Bishop Donegan said that the American Thanksgiving had its origin in the British harvest festivals. Harvest festivals were held by many ancient peoples, however, including the Jews.

Trinity Church was piled high with fruits and vegetables. Corn was on the stalks. There were beets, carrots, tomatoes, cabbages and apples. It was possible for New Yorkers to bring produce, and this was turned over to the Church Army.

Bishop Donegan said the finest blessings of life "are in the moral and spiritual realm, not in the material."

National Youth Week

Ten million Protestant young pe ple of the United States and Cana are planning to observe Nation Youth Week, January 30-February 1949, according to the Rev. Den Savage, Director of the You Council Services of the Unit Christian Youth Movement, whi sponsors the observance.

"Let God Speak" will be t theme.

"This theme expresses that sen of urgency which possesses since Christian young people in the times of confusion and uncertainty Mr. Savage stated. "Youth Week wi confront young people with the nee to hear God's message."

Denominational Day will be o served the first Sunday with t theme, "Let God Speak Throug Me." The final Sunday will have f its theme, "Let God Speak Throug a United Church."

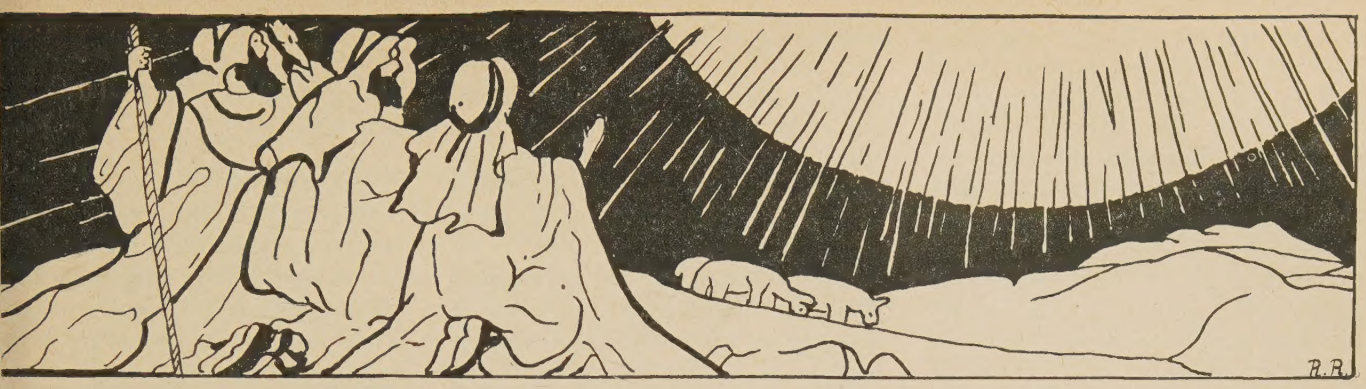
"Youth Week offers Christia young people of all denominatio and related groups an opportunity t unite in acknowledging one Lor and one common purpose in H name," Mr. Savage pointed out.

College and summer conferen scholarship awards will be a maj feature of the celebration of N tional Youth Week. Participan must be Christian youth between t ages of 16 and 24 years, who are a least in their last year of high scho and not more than their first year college.

"The purpose of the awards, in a dition to providing educationa training for Christian youth, is t center the thinking of young peopl upon the implications of the Chri tian Gospel and to stimulate the to greater activity in winning thei communities for Christ," stated M Savage.

The United Christian Yout Movement is the cooperative agenc of 40 Protestant denominations, 3 church and youth state councils, an 16 national agencies. It is admin istered through the Internationa Council of Religious Education.

Further information may be se cured from Mr. Savage, 203 Nort Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois



The Rural Church in China*

FRANK WILSON PRICE

Protestant Christianity is taking ɔt in the villages of China. At ıst two-thirds of all Protestant ıristians live in the country. The ral church is still young, with only few decades of history, but it is ɔwing more rapidly than the city urch; and the proportion of rural ıristians to the population of their me communities is larger than the ɔportion of Christians in China as vhole or in any one province. The ɔwth in numbers has been most ırked since 1922 and especially in e years since 1932.

The ten thousand rural churches, anch churches and village chapels e deeply influenced by the com- unity life about them. They show ıny characteristics of all societies in ral China. They are influenced by e inherited culture in which they e placed and by age-long customs d ways of living; and also by the ofound social changes coming even the villages as China feels the im- ct of modern forces and asserts her w national life.

Many environmental factors—popu- ion, agriculture, economic con- ions, family organization, com- unications, educational facilities, ɔral and religious behavior—condi- ɔn the development of the rural urch.

* From the book, *The Rural Church in China*, h the permission of the author and the publish- , Agricultural Missions, Inc., 156 Fifth Avenue, w York 10, N. Y. ($2.00 a copy)

An Influence

The rural church in turn is influencing the society about it. Hitherto this influence has been largely personal through the evangelistic work and friendly contacts of pastors, teachers and church members. But Christian group influence is beginning to be felt in many communities. The Christian church is being challenged by the physical and social needs as well as spiritual needs and also by the rising tide of interest in "rural reconstruction."

Rural parishes in China tend to follow the lines of natural communities and groupings of villages rather than the boundaries of artificial political divisions. This is a hopeful sign. The market area or natural community seems to be the best unit for programs of rural service which depend chiefly upon social organization and the efforts of the people themselves rather than upon political administration, and for such voluntary societies as the church.

A goal toward which to work would be at least one strong well-organized rural church under good leadership providing careful training for its members and a ministry of service to society in every natural rural community in China. At present not more than one-third of the rural communities in China have churches or even branch churches located in them.

There is need for both extensive and intensive effort, extensive effort in the planting of churches or branch churches in new communities, and intensive effort in the cultivation of individual parishes within limited areas in such a way that the church may become strong in numbers and in quality of life, support its own leadership and work and affect deeply the life about it.

The Program

The program of the rural church has been centered too much in the church building or the place where the church is located. The most successful churches are those which are reaching out constantly into the villages about them. Christian rural work must be home-centered and village-centered. Christian groups within villages must be strengthened and village leaders developed.

The Christian farmer must see the implications of his Christian faith and experience for his daily relationships and his regular vocation. The church then becomes the fellowship of village Christian groups in a natural community, a center for occasional periods of common worship and mutual help, and the heart of a Christian program for all the villages of the area.

The self-help principle needs to be emphasized from the very beginning in these village Christian

groups and community churches. This does not mean that supervision and some financial assistance are not necessary. On the other hand some of the most successful churches are those which have received the best direction and supervision and wisely administered grants-in-aid. But local initiative and effort have been constantly encouraged and money has been used to build up the parish and its program in such a way as to increase and not lessen the local sense of responsibility.

Subsidies

Subsidies to a local church are not in themselves harmful. The church may develop more rapidly toward self-support and with more enthusiasm if there is a resident pastor or pastor not too far away from the parish. The danger in isolated Christian groups which are part of a large circuit is that they may be satisfied with meeting only small local expenses and depend entirely upon mission-paid supervision for pastoral care.

The church organization and program needs to be developed around keenly felt needs or interests and sponsored as much as possible by the Christians themselves. Some churches are advancing much more rapidly than others in the enlisting of cooperation from church members and in the training of voluntary workers. The church, like all social groups in China without government direction and finance, must build from the bottom up. The activities of the church must be close to the interests and needs of the members. Any little church can do something in the way of service, among its members, in personal ways, and as a group for the community.

Training

The training of inquirers and members for the Christian life is of utmost importance. Here some churches have accomplished much more than others. Literacy should certainly be emphasized. There should be a planned program of nurture for all grades of membership. More should be done in Christian homes and through family religious education. Less than half of the sample churches studied are working effectively among children and youth of the church or of the community. This means that increasing attention must be given to religious education.

The achievement of self-support should be linked up to a program of training in stewardship and giving, with much greater enlistment of the time and labor as well as money of rural Christians. Some churches have shown that dignified, beautiful and impressive worship services are possible even in country churches. More Christian adaptations can be made of Chinese forms, Chinese music and Chinese art and architecture. The festival, both the Christianized Chinese festival and the church festival, should be given a larger place in the rural church.

Community Service

The question of what community service the rural church can undertake will be determined by its resources of leadership, membership and finance and the needs and opportunities in the community. The church must show its concern for social welfare and express its Christian faith and spirit in social relationships. Some things the church can do alone, some things it can initiate and turn over to community agencies, some forms of service it can carry on in cooperation with government or local groups. Our studies show that the church can take its part in rural betterment without losing its distinctive purpose and spirit.

The evangelical emphasis in the rural churches of the past must not be given up. The preaching and teaching of the gospel, the meeting of Christians for worship, the training of church members in Christian doctrine, are all important aims. But the church, the Christian group, which reaches out into the community in friendship and service and which influences ideals of rural reconstruction by its own faith and spirit, becomes stronger, not weaker. It finds new friends. It expresses Christian love. It is more of a leaven in community life. It has a part i the building of the new China. becomes more deeply rooted in vi lage society.

Vision and Passion

Finally, it is not merely new meth ods that is called for, but also a ne vision and a new passion. "We ar concerned that the ideals in the ne rural movement shall be Christia ideals. We are concerned over th driving power in reconstruction. W are concerned over the social ph losophy of it all, where the move ment is leading, what means it wil employ. We believe that we have message to give—of God and of Jesu Christ and of God's reign through human brotherhood and of God guided and God-inspired life and ex perience that may be shared. If th Christian church has any distinc message, distinct mission, distinc life to give and to live, this is th day of opportunity. The opportunity may pass if we are not ready. It wil be easier to let the church go alon in the old way of not disturbing th community and hence not disturbe by the community. For the rura church to work at the heart of rura reconstruction will cost a great dea in thought, in energy, in opposition perhaps in life. We will have to pre pare ourselves and help prepare th church, we who humbly believe i working with God and in lettin Him work in us to achieve the end of true growth. The task before u demands a combination of mysti cism and spiritual insight at thei best, a union of social intelligence and of the passion to serve.

"We may see the Promised Land from afar but never enter it. And ye the ideal of a Christian rural society in China joining hands with a Chris tian rural society in other lands gleams before us and inspires us who would follow the Great Teacher and Lord. If we are true to our calling a Christian teachers, the vision wil not let us rest, nor will it let gen erations of teachers who succeed us rest, until justice rolls down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream and the Reign of God comes with power in rural China."

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Financing the Country Church

WARD W. HIBBS

• My experience as a rural minister has taught me that the program of the church depends in large measure upon the willingness of the people to give freely and liberally of their money. This does not in any way conflict with the needed emphasis upon the spiritual fiber of the membership. But piety without financial aid means failure for the country church.

Some Principles Involved

Rural folk are not enthusiastic over faulty methods of church finance. They are quick to see that no plan is wise unless it meets the test of God's Word. Financing the church must meet the test of Christian stewardship.

It is important that we cultivate giving for the sake of others; that in our giving we shall bring Christ to men everywhere and fulfill the purpose for which Christ established His church.

Financial policies should spring out of the will of the membership of the local church and should be of such a nature as to include all age groups in the church.

All giving should be an act of worship.

Too many rural church folk look with suspicion and indifference upon plans and programs. The country church with its limited lay leadership, and in many instances a poorly trained ministerial leadership, has yet to see the value of a vital program built upon the life needs of the people.

Every Member Enlistment

The Every Member Enlistment plan is being used by an increasing number of town and country churches. Adapted to prevailing conditions in the church, this annual enlistment effort always proves helpful in renewing loyalty to the great task of the church and to the stewardship of money. Its chief value lies in training the members to have a system for financial support of the church and to administer it in a spirit of love for their Lord and His kingdom. Paul's method of finance, "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." (I Cor. 16: 2) is at the heart of the Enlistment Plan.

The Every Member Enlistment Plan, properly administered, will lead the people toward tithing. I am convinced that tithing should be taught and practiced with enthusiasm in our town and country churches. Until we remove the misconceptions that have gathered around tithing and present the principle as a wholesome and constructive means of working joyfully with God to achieve His purposes on earth, we shall not enlist many tithers in our country churches.

What to me is a fascinating method of tithing among farmers is the tithe of the annual crop and livestock. The farmer deliberately plans to set aside one-tenth of his produce, grain and cattle, and upon receipt of the market price turns it over to the church treasurer. He tills the soil and grows his crops conscious of his partnership with God. Instead of a cold cash proposition, as tithing is generally considered, the production of crops and stock in partnership with God has a life-bracing effect upon the farmer. "The first of the first-fruits of thy ground thou shalt bring unto the house of the Jehovah thy God." Exodus 34: 26.

Lord's Acre Plan

The Lord's Acre Plan is also used in many communities. When a member of the church raises and dedicates to the Lord an extra acre of some crop or some farm stock, sells it and gives the money to the church, you have the Lord's Acre plan at work. It is a supplementary method of giving, and does not take the place of proportionate giving. In one rural church where the Every Member En-

listment plan was refused, the Lord's Acre plan was accepted with enthusiasm.

In some instances group projects are preferred. In the Lord's Acre Plan we have a return to a wholesome religious practice of the Old Testament period without the legalism of that day. One cannot practice the plan without giving expression to such scripture as "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof," and "We are laborers together with God."

Results

I have found that the Every Member Enlistment plan has brought order and system to the financial program of many churches, and has resulted in increased giving.

Recently I was invited to a strong country church to help with the enlistment effort. I found every detail worked out and enthusiasm high for the final stage of the enlistment. My task was to conduct the worship service on Saturday evening and two services on Sunday. At the conclusion of the Sunday evening service all but $300 of the budget of $1,300 was in sight. Aside from this, a cottage was purchased for the parsonage and most of the cost was subscribed. Shortly after this program was completed, a pastor came to the parish.

Another church, located in a community of good farmers who own their homes, became interested in the Lord's Acre Plan. The pastor had to have a new car, and these folk saw the opportunity to help pay for it through Lord's Acre projects. At the end of the year this church, through individual projects—produce from the garden, turkeys, chickens, eggs, hogs, etc., had reduced the "car note" by $125.

A year later, approximately $100 came from their projects, and was applied to the payment of the car. But the Lord's Acre plan has done something else for this church. Young and old have learned the joy of increased giving. Today the church has doubled its regular giving, and for the first time in the history of the church pledges are being made to the program of the church.

The Lord's Acre Plan did not fire the imagination of the members of another church which had fifty members and splendid financial resources, except for one poor mountain farmer. Before me is the piece of paper on which he wrote the following a year ago: "The Lord's pig, $14.50; tithe of grain, $23.40; other tithe, $21.07." This member gave to the Lord's work $58.97 during one season and is today a thrilling example of consecration plus action in the country church.

Religion in rural areas is not dead. Its vitality and attractiveness, in spite of almost insurmountable obstacles, must make it a vital power for redeeming souls and society.

• What a man does for himself dies with him; but what he does for his community lives long after he has gone.

—Theodore Roosevelt

The Little Brown Church in the Vale

• Situated in a scenic wooded valley at the edge of Bradford village, two miles northeast of Nashua, Iowa, the Little Brown Church in the Vale was built eighty-four years ago as a pioneering community enterprise. That was a Civil War year and there were few young men in Iowa, but the older men rallied to the pastor's call and furnished materials and labor to erect the house of worship.

The Rev. J. K. Nutting was pastor of the parish at that time. He had held worship services in a school house, a lawyer's office, and an abandoned store with doors and windows gone. His salary was $450 a year—"payable in goods."

In the same year that the Little Brown Church was built, 1864, the hymn that made it famous was sung for the first time within its unfinished walls by the composer, Dr. William S. Pitts.

Historic Shrine

Today, the Little Brown Church carries on as a neighborhood religious center, but it has also become a historic shrine and ranks high on the list of places to visit on sentimental and sight-seeing journeys. It is estimated that from forty to sixty thousand persons visit the church each year.

From every part of the nation young men and women come to the Little Brown Church to be married. Most of the ceremonies are performed by the Rev. Fred L. Hanscom, the 78-year-old pastor, although couples sometimes bring their home pastors from nearby communities. Mrs. Hanscom provides organ music for the weddings, and vocal numbers "upon request." On one day Mr. Hanscom married twenty-eight couples, and that has remained his record.

The Bell Rope

One couple wrote to Mr. Hanscom to say, "We're still remembering the bell rope." And that is one of the high spots for any couple married at the church. Mr. Hanscom meets them at the door after the service, places their hands together on the bell rope in the entry and admonishes,

"Now you must pull the rope together. This is what married life is—it's a pull together. You must love each other and work for each other to make your marriage a happy one."

The Little Brown Church is Congregational Christian in denomination. It has approximately one hundred members now, and Sunday school and worship services are held every Sunday.

The church is almost a museum. Its walls are hung with pictures and original manuscripts. The tiny wooden pews seat only three to five persons. The hymn books contain, of course, the famous "Church in the Wildwood," and above each copy of the song is a tiny stamp, "Thou Shalt Not Steal—Ex. 20-15."

Eight arched windows look out through the pines and picnic tables on the lawn, and the afternoon sunlight filters across the wide board floor and across the steps which bear the inscription, "Let me live in a house by the side of the road and be a friend to man."

—R. B. R.

Types of Rural Church Cooperation

RAY W. G. BAILEY

Now the Lord of peace himself
you peace always by all means."
Thessalonians 3: 16a) The means
eace which we shall here discuss
those relating to rural church
eration.

r-congregation and Inter-
mination Cooperation:

y these terms we understand
e than mere denominational
erences, for by the very nature
ur denominational set-ups these
a necessary activity. As Benson
Landis observes, "too often the
rches in rural communities limit
r cooperation to a joint service
Thanksgiving,"[1] although the
ortance of such services of wor-
is not to be minimized.

erhaps the simplest project to
orm cooperatively is the re-
ous survey or canvass, as far as
l participation by denominations
oncerned. No worship services
involved; no doctrines or inter-
ations are at stake. It is an ex-
nely rare religious group that is
illing to join in such a venture.
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s of all cooperative ventures are
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ion is necessary: The survey is a
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hurched; it must not stop with
mere gathering of the data, or be
sidered successful because several
erwise uncooperative groups co-
rated.

nother relatively simple venture
he ministerial association. All
frequently the rural minister suf-
from a sense of isolation. Few
is parishioners have been as for-
ate as he in the matter of educa-
and acquaintance with the so-
ed cultural things. This present
h is fast becoming an untruth,
as long as it remains true the
ciation with others more or less
himself is emotionally and cul-

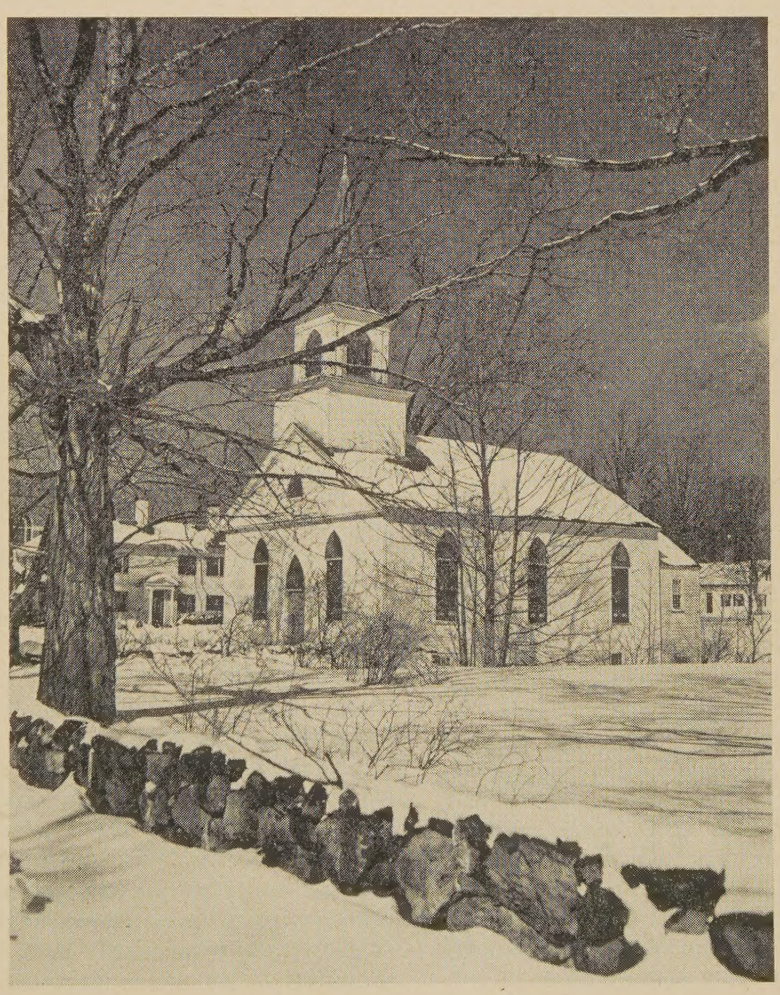
turally good for the individual minister.

Of still greater importance, however, is the value to be gained from conversation about the activities of various church groups, from interchange of ideas and experiences. It has been the experience of the Columbia County Ministerial Association that a speaker from outside the county circle draws a larger attendance at its meetings; the speaker need not be well known, but must be well qualified.

Role of Laymen

Inasmuch as laymen are our ultimate concern, we are especially desirous of bringing them to realize the values in church cooperation. The possibilities inherent in a council of churches are almost endless. "For twenty-five years the young people of four churches in Milford, Indiana, have been meeting together on Sunday evenings for worship, a program of lecture or discussion, and a social hour. Their Youth Union is well established as a unified Christian Agency in the community; no one thinks of breaking up the group along denominational lines,"[2] according to a report in "The Rural Church," a publication of Garrett Biblical Institute.

[2] The Rural Church, Vol. VIII, No. 1, December, 1945-January, 1946, Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois, p. 7.



Church in Winter
Hopkinton, N. H.

—*A. Devaney, Inc.*

Landis, Benson Y., "Why a Protestant
n and Country Church Movement?"
gious Education, March-April, 1945,
).

Using a county or trade area as the bounds, a council of churches might carry this type of cooperative effort into men's and women's work, vacation and week-day schools, teacher training institutes, Sunday evening or mid-week services, or special services in Advent or Holy Week or Lent, on Rogation Days and Thanksgiving—yes, and even for services of Holy Communion. Denominational leaders report the power of the great communion service at the Lausanne Conference.

Once again, there is great difficulty in getting such a thing down to the grass roots—one World Wide Communion Sunday a certain Presbyterian in my acquaintance stayed away from the union service in the Methodist church even though her pastor shared in the distribution of the elements "because," she said, "I'm a Presbyterian and not a Methodist." On World Wide Communion Sunday of all days!

These types and illustrations of rural church cooperation all have to do with unity without union. But the natural outcome of them is bound to be actual organic union in at least some areas. Objections to such thought are out of order at this juncture, however—just as in a discussion about allowing a Negro to earn a decent living the question "Would you want your daughter to marry a Negro?" is out of order. It may be—and may God hasten the day—that the present difficult differences between whites and Negroes and between one Christian denomination and another will be so negligible that marriage will be welcomed.

Five Basic Types

It is true that in some communities these denominational marriages may be consummated. In other communities there can be but a courtship, or perhaps only a think-of-you-like-a-sister relationship at the present time. For all of these communities there are five basic types of church cooperation.

One and two both involve an exchange of fields, or may be worked out without a definite trade.

One, a union church under one denominational name. Rio and Wyocena each had a Baptist church and each had a Congregational church. An exchange was made. Rio now has the Union Congregational Church and Wyocena the Union Baptist Church.

This arrangement is more satisfactory than two, which is the undenominational union church, or community church. The greatest undesirability of the community church is that it may become only a new denomination or sect; it loses all ties with all established denominations. This is but a tendency, not a necessity.

Three, the federated church. In this arrangement two or more denominations become one local congregation, still retaining their separate denominational memberships. Many federated churches have fared very well, but the dangers are rather easy to see.

Four, the group ministry, which is as yet quite unique. In a group ministry several neighboring pastors pool their various talents, each concentrating in his specialty in the guidance of that line of work in all the churches served by the ministers involved.

Five, the larger parish. This type of rural church cooperation is frequently misunderstood. The larger parish involves several churches not too far distant from one another who have a common governing council either instead of or, more usually, in addition to their individual boards. They engage a pastor, who is the pastor for the entire larger parish. He has a staff which may include one or more assistant pastors, a religious education director, and any other staff members as may be desirable.

The genius of the larger parish system is not that it costs less (which it is not designed to do), but that it accomplishes more. All members of the staff serve all the churches of the parish, and so duplication of effort is avoided. This type of rural church cooperation, to the extent of combining congregations, is proving the most successful and most popular. It allows for the retention of local churches and the preservation of traditional ties and at the same time exemplifies the best and highest of rural church cooperation.

Inter-organization and Inter-community Cooperation:

In regard to cooperation by rural churches with other organizations and communities it is necessary to do little more than state a principle. Many Pilates there are in congregations today—and in pulpits—who sincerely believe that things not distinctly the Church of Christ ought never to be touched or meddled with by the church, its pastors, or members. In one community the session of a church thought it best not to "get mixed up in" an affair involving a tavern moving next to a building to be used as a youth center. Some up-and-coming farmers severely oppose their pastor's treating of soil erosion control as a holy act even though they employ it on their own farms and see its value to themselves and to God's earth.

But "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." (Psalm 24: 1) Dr. B. H. Cain writes that "the problems of the community must become the problems of the church."[3] Reporting on the Elgin Conference, the correspondent to the Christian Century stated that "the rural church must control the land in the area which it serves. . . . Churches should help their members to acquire ownership of the land and should guide them in their use of it. . . . The rural minister should take the lead in developing reverence toward the soil and in bringing the help of experts to the farm daily."[4]

Rev. LeRoy Day, of Delavan, Wisconsin writes: "Everything that increases the possibilities for the fellowship and social effectiveness of men is good, and everything that reduces these possibilities is sinful."[5]

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[3] Cain, B. H., *The Church Ministering to Rural Life,* Dayton, Ohio, The Home Mission and Church Erection Society, The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, p. 15 (no date).

[4] Venable, Charles Leslie, "Protestant Rural Leadership Meets," Christian Century, November 29, 1944, pp. 1388 f.

[5] Day, LeRoy, "The Church Discovers the Community," International Journal of Religious Education, June, 1946, p. 3.

There are many agencies at work rural communities today: school, ɔrary, 4H, F.F.A., homemakers, e Grange, Farm Bureau, Farmers' nion, Boy and Girl Scouts, county ent, soil conservationist, and so *ad infinitum*. Insofar as they are rving the people's good, they are od and worthy of the cooperation the rural church. We may be cer-in of this: These agencies will at-act the rural people; they must be epared to use the good in them d to keep them good. The church s the people as its charge; it fol-ws then that the church has its ople's activities as its charge.

oposals for One State

We have come together to the int at which we see the need for ral church cooperation and un-rstand various possible methods making it real. "Let us therefore llow after the things which make r peace, and things wherewith one ay edify another." (Romans 14: 19) ere are three suggested projects for e Wisconsin Council of Churches perform through its Commission Town and Country Church.

(1) Develop rural-mindedness. lthough this point has not been welt upon as such in this paper, it truly the intent of the entire es-y. Rural church cooperation is orthy of consideration because the ral church itself is worthy—the ral people are worthy. This effort tends from the extremities of the nallest rural community to the rgest urban community. It em-oys the columns of city newspapers d of farm magazines. It arranges lpit exchanges or lecture engage-ents and "field" trips both to and om the fields. It includes what-er means might be developed to e end that people become rural-inded.

(2) Conduct a state-wide re-gious survey. The findings of the rvey made in our neighboring ate, Iowa, suggest forcibly that we ed a similar survey; our situation nnot be much different. The sur-y may be by sample, but will be considerably greater value if a mplete coverage is made. This ould be a large undertaking, but it would yield larger fruit. We encourage the farmer to have his soil analyzed so that he will know what fertilizer is needed, what seed will grow and develop the best crops, and perhaps what machinery and other equipment he needs. Can we rightfully do less with our spiritual soil?

(3) Carry out an inter-denominational experiment. This is more than a mere thought, or the projection of a dream into the far distant future. Several months ago letters were written to denominational executives of the churches in the Wisconsin Council, in which these executives were asked the plans and activities of their denominations in the town and country field. Here are statements from two of the replies:

"A good study for your commission (Town and Country) to undertake would be the possibility of aligning the smaller churches into a larger parish in areas where we have two or three denominations holding membership in the Wisconsin Council of Churches. We have some vacant churches lying in such areas which could well be a part of an interdenominational larger parish program."

"We are attempting to open a number of group ministry projects in the state. However, we have limited the effort to churches in our own ministry, but can visualize the project on a wider basis."

Rural church cooperation is needed, and it is possible. Pray God that we may be his instruments to effect it.

Leadership Needed in Town and Country

• *The Methodist Woman*, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, N. Y., October, 1948, publishes an article on the above topic by Marjorie Minkler. In addition to able leadership, the author stresses the need for refresher courses, workers' conferences and adequate equipment for the advance of the rural church. She also says, "It is particularly essential that all denominations should cooperate in small communities. Together we must advance."

Commission on Worship

• The Commission on Worship of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America held its autumn meeting at Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., on October 5, 1948. The emphasis of the day's program was on worship as it relates to the rural church, and the Commission had as its guests about forty pastors from rural churches in that area of New York State.

In the absence of Dr. Hampton Adams, chairman of the Commission, Dr. Mark Rich presided at both morning and afternoon sessions.

The afternoon program included addresses on "The Opportunity of Festival Occasions in the Rural Church," by Edward K. Ziegler; "Drama in the Rural Church," by Margaret B. Johnstone; and "Worship at the Amsterdam Assembly," by Deane Edwards. The session ended with a communion service, conducted by Albert N. Rogers of Alfred, N. Y.

An ecumenical worship service, held at the First Presbyterian Church, Ithaca, N. Y., concluded the day's program. Frank J. Holmes, President of the Tompkins County Council of Churches, presided at the service and was assisted by the church's pastor, Walter A. Dodds, and Mark Rich. Edwin T. Dahlberg addressed the group on "The Highlights of the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council of Churches." One of the highlights of the evening service was music led by massed choirs from eleven rural communities, under the direction of Mrs. G. Colby Bartlett, with Barbara R. Lanning at the organ.

Correspondence

EDITOR OF
TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH:

The journals are splendid. The writing is polished. The thinking clear and definite. Each article was for the benefit of the country church that is a going institution in a prosperous community.

—BERTHA M. FULLER
Little Rock, Ark.

Wordsworth's Ideal Country Pastor

The Rev. Robert Walker, 1709-1802

WILLIAM L. BAILEY

• Almost undue attention has been given, in these days of a new era in the country church, to the exceptional man in the exceptional place. There is consequently all the more value in those broad scientific studies which display the average, and give us knowledge of the "rank and file." These being always the most numerous are always the most in need of such leadership as will reveal their fullest possibilities.

It might well be conceded that William Wordsworth would know a rural pastor when he found one. For although he pioneered the spiritual interpretation of Nature in our modern world, he was always deeply concerned with country people of all types. The pastor, the waggoner, the reaper, and many another, are characterized at length, and especially in their spirit of life. Moreover Wordsworth appreciated to the full the importance of the church, and one of his longest poems centers about the personality and life philosophy of a country pastor. That person was, —as the poet explained at length in a note which is almost a memoir, the Rev. Robert Walker.

How He Was Found

Wordsworth had come upon him in the Duddon River district since famous by virtue of the many Sonnets which its beauty drew from him. Seathwaite Church was located just where the brook of the same name broke in a rapid torrent into the river. Here Wordsworth found "The Pastor," "The Parsonage," and "The Churchyard among the Mountains" and was led to give expression to the spirit he found in these. It is the philosophy of country life in its relation to the country church that forms the greater portion of the "excursion."

Walker was curate of Seathwaite for sixty-six years. This is probably the longest tenure on record. And Seathwaite was probably the smallest and poorest of the parishes in all the land. It was this, indeed, that led the poet to single Walker out and immortalize him in his sonnets as a worthy compeer of the country parson of Chaucer. Musing on the meaning of this little country church in the rocky valley and on the life and spirit of its faithful shepherd, he wrote this,—a paean of the country church:

"Sacred Religion; 'mother of form and fear,'
Dread arbitress of mutable respect,
New rites ordaining when the old are wrecked,
Or cease to please the fickle worshipper;
Mother of Love! (that name best suits thee here)
Mother of Love! for this deep vale, protect
Truth's holy lamp, pure source of bright effect,
Gifted to purge the vapory atmosphere
That seeks to stifle it; as in those days
When this low Pile a Gospel Teacher knew,
Whose good works formed an endless retinue:
A Pastor such as Chaucer's verse portrays;
Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew;
And tender Goldsmith crowned with deathless praise."

Conserving Spiritual Values

One of Walker's chief contributions was as a conservator of spiritual value and sound traditions in days of great change and much doubt. It is so that Wordsworth introduces him in "The Excursion" as "A Priest . . . before whose *life* such doubts Fall to the ground. . . ."

The outward events of Walker's life were simple enough, as of record, yet his achievements are little short of miraculous and the spirit displayed that of a saint. *Energy of character* is his title to fame.

Walker's life covered the eighteenth century save for a year or two. It was not an easy time for rural England and especially hard for this poor hill parish of Lancashire. Walker was born sickly and hence, as the youngest of twelve children in a poor home, fated for the church. Later in life he was a schoolmaster for a while at Loweswater, nearby, and by the assistance of a "gentleman" was enabled to prepare for "holy orders." On ordination, two curacies were open to him, one at Coniston, quite near, and the other in his native vale. This he chose, for it had a cottage-parsonage, and he had just married a domestic of the neighborhood, although the living had only five pounds of income. Even with the addition of another station twenty years later the income was never more than seventeen pounds per annum.

But it was precisely these characteristics of the charge that seem to have appealed to Walker. There were many such parishes but little better off, and there were many country people in the land who depended for spiritual leadership upon the pastors of just such churches. He purposed to be one of the people: to live among them, and like them; he himself was of them and so was his wife. And it was so that Wordsworth found him and appreciated the spiritual genius of the man.

The Art of Living

The achievements of this man in the art of living are almost incredible. Even from so limited a point of view as his personal fortune, he achieved no less a result than an estate of over two thousand pounds at the time of his death. And meanwhile he had raised and educated well and sent out to lives of prosperity and usefulness a very large family. His hospitality as a parish

fest was famous, albeit the munience of his Sabbath entertainment eant simple though plenteous fare ring the week at home. In a very ıe sense, the life of this country stor is an example of what the aster may have meant when he omised that "the meek shall inrit the earth."

His was a busy home and theirs long day. He himself sat up late d arose early. In the middle years his life, when the responsibilities family and church were fully on him, he was wont, while his mily was at rest, to retire to a tle room he had built on the roof his house and fitted up with oks, remaining there often till the xt day was about to dawn. The instry of his home set an example the poorest of the parish. Indus-, cleanness, happiness were its gh virtues. No railings, no idleness, indulgence or passion were pertted. Every child, however small, d its appointed task. He himself ıs among them, his own hands sy with the large spinning wheel, en while teaching and hearing lesns, working with them, but above guiding their thoughts.

His garden was tended by his own nds. He had right of pasturage on the mountains for a few sheep d a couple of cows. He rented two three acres in addition to his own re of glebe. And thus he took his ace among his cotters as one of em.

He regularly took his part in the terchange of work in hay-making d sheep-shearing. The only differce made for him was that he was corded the compliment of the esent of a haycock or a fleece! This cause he was their parson, as well a "first-rate hand."

Even after a mill came to the ook nearby his family dressed in mespun. His hearth burned peat ocured from the moors by their rn labor. They used rush lights, erving candles for Christmas and ecial occasions.

ught to Unify

Much of his success as a pastor ong his people came from this. ıe distresses and embarrassment of his parishioners he served well by his remarkable talent for thrift and business. Yet he was no "divider" among them, but sought to embody, in his business service to them, a spirit nobler than the law or custom. And upon many an occasion selfishness, obstinacy, and discord gave way before the breathings of his good will and saintly integrity. Thus was materialism "cast out" of his parish. The economies of his own home were the economies of a saint.

And as such his circle of influence was not confined to Seathwaite. Many a mother, it is said, far beyond the parish, was wont to tell a child of Mr. Walker, and beg him to be as "good" a man.

But truly he was of the sort to appreciate a Country Parish. He was a passionate admirer of Nature. He often spoke of Her as his Mother and himself as a dutiful child. While engaged on the mountains it was his greatest pleasure to view the rising sun; and in tranquil evenings as it slid behind the hills he "blessed" its departure. He was skilled in fossils and plants: a constant observer of the stars and winds: the atmosphere was his delight, and he made many experiments in weather-lore. But all this he used for spiritual ends both in the instruction of his children and in his work for the cure of souls. The last night of his life, as was his custom, he still tottered to the door, leaning upon his daughter's arm, "to examine the heavens and to meditate a few moments in the open air." His last words were "How clear the moon shines tonight."

Walker had no ambition whatsoever to pass out of his valley into the artificialities of the larger world of place and preferment. And this, one may be sure, was not the result of personal lethargy. At bottom it came from his loyalty to the Church as a whole. He was very zealous for the Establishment, but largely because of the unity it gave to the community. On one occasion he refused to make a very profitable investment with a Quaker because it would give some material advantage to dissent. He used to boast that he had never had a dissenter in his parish. On another occasion he refused an added curacy because it would make his people feel that his heart was divided and produce a wrong spirit. This was in the days of multiple livings, and it would have added largely to his income, but he refused for a reason that, if more commonly the rule, would solve the circuit problem.

For he had a unique conception of the parish. It was something more than a geographic delimitation. He wished it to be the spiritual hearth and home of all who had ever communed there. Even to the end of his long life he regularly gathered there his own widely scattered family and as many others as he might to partake of the sacrament. And he took peculiar pride in the total of the distances they came and of the combined ages of the participants.

This was Wordsworth's ideal of a country parson.

—Reprinted from *Home Lands*

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

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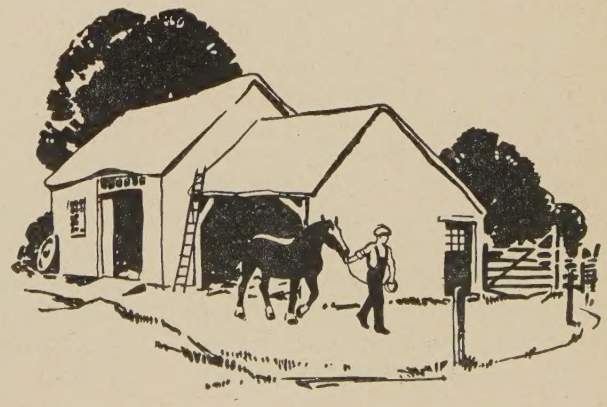
Convocation Number

• The editors have decided to interpret the San Jose Convocation on the Church in Town and Country in the February issue rather than in the January number, as was previously announced. A more adequate account of the commission reports can be given in that issue.

"New Frontiers in Rural America"

• Margery W. Steer writes on the subject above in the *Standard,* the publication of the American Ethical Union, New York, for October. She has lived on an Ohio farm. Numerous instances of community cooperation are described. The final plea is that ethical religion must protest against the destruction of the person that is now going on in urban life.



Book Reviews

The Church in the Rural Community. By William C. Martin. New York, Board of Missions and Church Extension, The Methodist Church, 150 Fifth Avenue.

Bishop Martin of the Topeka Area of the Methodist Church writes a book based on the work and messages of the National Methodist Rural Life Conference, held at Lincoln in 1947. There were eight study committees which explored various phases of rural life and their relation to the church.

These groups not only brought in items for the agenda of the Conference, but also made studies and recommendations which were issued as reports after the adjournment of the Conference. The reports of these groups are the "basis" of the present volume, although "very little" of the exact language has been reproduced.

The materials are finally presented under six heads, as follows:

Family and Community Life
The Rural Church and the Land
The Ministry and the Rural Church
The Program of the Rural Church
Church Cooperation
The Christian World View

In a critical discussion of the federated church, Bishop Martin quotes the general conference of the Methodist Church as declaring:

"Federation and union afford expedient temporary service as acceptable alternatives in some fields, but should obtain entity as soon as possible."

It is said that property was the main cause of irritation in 185 federated churches studied.

References are also made to the development of multi-denominational churches on government projects and in many of the over-crowded war production communities, some of which were in rural areas.

In the chapter on "The Christian World View," it is stated that "the farmer feeds the world, and most of the people in the world are hungry."

Bishop Martin is the "Episcopal supervisor of an area which is predominantly rural."

—Benson Y. Landis

Let's Act Now! By Richard T. Baker. The Friendship Press, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. 124 pages. 50c (paper).

This is a missions book of unusual nature. The style is an invitation to read. It is superb in its brevity, clarity and pungency. The challenge to the missionary task of the church faces issues and situations for a world-wide advance. "When it (the church) swings into action around a program of public health in a Chinese village, that is the church obeying its instructions to 'go and tell of me!' When it preaches, teaches, heals, trains the mind and hands of an African farmer to wrest a more abundant life from the soil he works, again the church is up to its same old job of going and telling." (p. 56)

Loaded with explosive ideas, this book challenges every reader to see the church in the light of a pioneer leading the struggle toward a more Christian neighborhood, community, national and international fellowship.

—Don F. Pielstick

Roman Catholic Rural Life Prayers

• Bishop Schlarman of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peoria has translated thirty-two prayers, published by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Des Moines, Iowa, at fifty cents a copy. There are blessings for the fields, for seeds and growing plants, for fully matured plants and for animals, and for prepared food.

It is noted in a Foreword that the early Christians used nothing, drank not even a glass of water, without signing it with the sign of the cross, the sign of redemption and sanctification. So the Church has "incorporated all things into Christ; to bless and hallow all things that are for the use of man.

"By doing so, the Church establishes a divine contact between the body Eucharist and these objects, transforming them, making them fit instruments for daily living, working, toiling and suffering of her children. . . ."

In the Roman Catholic Church this development springs in part from a movement begun by the Pope Pius X, dedicated primarily to the reunion of altar and home, to the fruitful union of the vine and branches. This liturgical movement has been called "the sacramental apostolate." It is declared in this booklet that "Catholic action" is the logical extension of the "sacramental apostolate."

"So that rural life may be incorporated into Christ," these prayers have been published as an aid to those engaged in various ways in "the rural life apostolate."

Among the thirty-two prayers are the following:

Blessing of a Farm

This prayer may be said to obtain God's blessing on a farm with its buildings or for the farmhouse alone.

Bless, O Lord, Almighty God, this house (or, this farm). May health and purity, goodness and meekness, and every virtue reign here. May all those who dwell here be filled with faithfulness to Thy law and with thanksgiving to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. May this blessing remain on this house (or, this farm) and all who dwell here. Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Blessing of a Mill

Almighty, eternal God, who hast said: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," bless this mill which has been built to grind the grain from which our bread is made, and send an angel of light to guard this mill. *Amen.*

Blessing for the Sprouting Seed

To Thee, O Lord, we cry and pray: bless this sprouting seed, strengthen it in the gentle movement of soft winds, refresh it with the dew of heaven, and let it grow to full maturity for the good of body and soul. *Amen.*

The Roman Catholic Church has recently added prayers "for the telegraph, the dynamo, the railroad, and the airplane." The following prayer is said over the dynamo:

Lord God omnipotent, Creator of all lights, bless this new machine constructed to produce light, and

ınt that after the darkness of this rld we may come to Thee, the ver-failing light. Through Christ r Lord. *Amen.*

In the church, "eggs have always en a symbol of the Resurrection." ıe "Blessing of Eggs" reads as fol-ws:

We pray Thee, O Lord, may the ıce of Thy benediction come down on these eggs, that they may be althful food for Thy people who t them in thanksgiving for the surrection of our Lord Jesus ırist, who liveth with Thee and leth for all eternity. *Amen.*

The "Blessing of Bread and Cake"

Lord Jesus Christ, Thou the ead of angels, Thou the living ead of eternal life, graciously deign bless this bread as Thou didst ess the five loaves in the desert: at all who partake of it may have alth of body and soul. Who livest d reignest forever. *Amen.*

The "Blessing of Fresh Fruits" ads:

Bless, O Lord, these new fruits ere insert the name of the fruits), d grant that all who eat of them Thy holy name may obtain health body and soul. Through Christ r Lord. *Amen.*

There is a lengthy blessing of rbs on the Feast of the Assump-on.

ɔorest Credit Risks in the Nation

The borrowers from the Farmers ome Administration, formerly the rm Security Administration, were ten called the poorest credit risks the world when the agency got ıder way.

In the fiscal year ending June 30, 48, the F.H.A. lent $75,000,000, d collected $136,697,980 from bor-wers. The agency has lent over ,000,000,000 since organization, s collected over $830,000,000, plus 10,000,000 in the form of interest. Good record for the little man ıo often has few friends in Con-ess or in town and country urches.

Country Doctors

• In *Life,* New York, of September 20, there is a "photographic essay" portraying the life and work of Dr. Ernest Ceriani of Kremmling, Colorado, which lies 115 miles west of Denver. A single country doctor takes care of 2,000 people. He has no vacations, few days off. He happens to have a small hospital in which to work.

There are two nurses, who scrub floors in their spare time. Dr. Ceriani is 32, is already slightly stooped because of the hard pace he must follow. His income from a busy practice is lower than that of city doctors. But he is compensated by the affection of his patients and neighbors. For him "this is enough." Is it enough for the 22,000 medical students of the nation?

In the *Saturday Evening Post* of October 9 there is also an article on country doctors, in which it is plainly stated that most medical students are headed for the cities on graduation because there is more money there.

The First Visiting Nurse

• Miss Harriet Chichester of White Plains, N. Y., aged 90, is reported to be the first visiting nurse employed to serve rural communities of Northern Westchester County.

Fifty years ago she walked to homes of the sick, or hired a livery horse and buggy, or rode trains on a pass. The engineers in those days would stop the cars anywhere between the stations and let the nurse walk across fields to where someone was ill.

Fifty years ago a group met to organize a nursing association in the home of James Wood, a Friends minister. There were those present who hoped the nurse would work without salary. In the end, Miss Chichester was engaged for $60 a month.

Miss Chichester was born in Corning, N. Y. She was the "middle one" of seven children in the home of a Presbyterian minister.

Grandma Moses at 88

• Grandma Moses, one of the nation's famous artists, celebrated her 88th birthday recently at Eagle Bridge, N. Y. She began painting at the age of 76. Her subjects are known as "rural life primitives."

Grandma Moses—Mrs. Anna M. R. Moses—first painted as an avocation. Her doctor advised her to "give up farm work." She sent some paintings to the county fair and others were shown in a local drug store. (At the county fair she won prizes for her preserves but not for her art work.)

At the drug store a collector saw the paintings and bought them with great enthusiasm. Since then Grandma Moses has become famous and a few of her paintings have sold for as much as $3,000 each.

At the 88th birthday party, famous figures from the art world appeared. Mrs. Moses was the life of the party. She says that she paints mornings, takes a nap in the afternoons, and in the evening she is able to listen to young folks talking until midnight.

Grandma Moses has had a number of large showings in New York. She has now painted more than 1,300 pictures in the twelve years that she has been an artist.

Hero's Widow Takes Country Church

• In Sharon, Vermont, the minister of the Congregational Christian church is the widow of the Rev. George Fox, one of the four chaplains who gave their lives for others when the transport Dorchester sank in 1943. Mrs. Fox says she decided to carry on the work when she heard that a minister was needed at Sharon. She is reported in press dispatches as saying that the attendance on Sunday mornings numbers 40 to 50 persons, and that the ministry brings great satisfactions. The heroism of the four chaplains is commemorated on a United States postage stamp.

A Prayer in Winter

ALMIGHTY GOD, who rulest the changing seasons, and fulfillest in all Thine own unchanging purpose; we bless Thee that beneath all that now in winter seems cold and dead, Thou art keeping safe the hidden germs of life, and preparing for the days when the earth shall again bud and blossom, and again bring forth her harvest.

And still dost Thou oft times clothe all things around us with the perfection of beauty, when Thou sendest forth Thy frost and snow, and fillest the brief day with sunshine, and makest the night glorious with countless stars. We thank Thee for the shelter and comfort of our homes, and pray for the kind and compassionate heart toward all whose lot is harder, and who in poverty and sickness shrink before the cold. *Amen.*

—JOHN HUNTER, *Devotional Services for Public Worship,* James Maclehose and Sons, 1895

Recreation in Churches and Rural Areas

• More than 1,000 delegates from 46 states and 3 foreign countries attended the 30th National Recreation Congress held in the early fall. The Recreation Congress maintained its tradition as a hard-working convention. The program of the Congress, which is conducted by the National Recreation Association, consisted of the following sections:

Church Recreation Workers

A new feature of the 1948 Congress was a series of three one-day institutes. On Monday about 100 workers took part in a special training program for church recreation workers. From 8:30 until 5:00 both laymen and clergy met together and discussed special problems.

The luncheon meeting was addressed by the Rt. Rev. Msgr. L. G. Ligutti of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference who made a plea for public support of recreation which would enable the individual to integrate the recreational phase of his life with other aspects as a participant rather than as a spectator. To do this, he said, would offset what he called "recreational illiteracy" in the United States and throughout the world. Recreational illiteracy had political consequences in the social and economic fields.

He said that dependency upon the state for recreation leads to dependency upon the state in other aspects of our life. "Recreation is essential to the human being as a human being, not just a part of him," he said.

In Rural Areas

On the next day approximately 100 leaders from the rural areas met to face problems of providing recreation for the open country. Dr. Carl R. Taylor, head of the division of farm population and rural life of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, highlighting the luncheon meeting said, "Love of beauty is not weak and sentimental and enjoyment of play is not childish."

True recreation is rather a true creative experience and a value in itself independent of any utilitarian benefits that might be derived in the process. Children, he declared, should be taught its techniques and its values.

On the third day another group of about 100 representatives from small towns discussed the special problem of supplying the recreational needs of citizens who live in small towns where money is lacking and facilities are inadequate. Dr. A. F. Wileden, rural sociologist of the University of Wisconsin, addressing this group, spoke of the need for a more positive emphasis in the field of recreation, and said that the emphasis should be increasingly on the small community where it is most needed.

He outlined the development of recreation of rural people from a close association with work to the present more formally organized approach through schools, churches and a variety of organizations. The current phase of the rural recreation movement, said Dr. Wileden, is from the use of volunteer workers to the increasing employment of professionally trained recreation leaders with broad vision and a social approach to the field.

Activities sessions were conducted daily in the following: arts and crafts, drama, folk and square dancing, music and social recreation. In these sessions, the delegates participated in the activities and learned new leadership techniques.

General sessions were devoted to brief summaries of the discussion meetings and to addresses by outstanding leaders. Among the latter was Dr. William Alexander of Oklahoma City who said, "Young people today are basically sound, basically moral and basically honest and more than anything else, we need to believe in them and show them we believe in them. One of the best ways is to give them trained, professional recreation leadership so they will not have to go to the dark corners for their social contacts."

Governor Val Peterson of Nebraska told the delegates that farm and small-town children now have the same leisure time needs as the city children, and that communities, schools and churches must meet the challenge.

New Recreation Facilities

Major General Lewis A. Pick, co-author of the Pick-Sloan Plan for the Missouri River Basin, thrilled the delegates with a statement that when the Plan was completed, the area would become the world's recreation paradise. He said that six new vast reservoirs with a combined shoreline of more than five thousand miles will soon provide unlimited recreation facilities for residents of the mid-West.

"These recreation facilities," said General Pick, "are being planned with the approval of the local authorities and with the cooperation of various Federal agencies concerned with recreation." They will include shelter buildings, access roads, boat docks, swimming facilities, picnic ovens, cabin sites, areas for various special church, 4-H club and Scout groups.